

LITTLE COMPTON SCHOOL BUILDING COMMITTEE

MINUTES

Meeting – December 13, 2010

Wilbur School Commons – 6:00 pm

Members Present: Chairman Tom Alder, Jacob Talbot, Ben Gauthier, Mike Steers, John Osbourne, Bob Mushen, Beryl Borden, BG Shanklin, Tom Arkins, Mark Rapp, Jim Gibney, Micah Shapiro, Lynn Brousseau-Lebreux, Dave MacGregor,

Members Absent: Superintendent Kathy Crowley, Margaret Manning, Dorie Freeman, Don Gomez

The Firm of Durkee Brown Viveiros Werenfels Architects was in attendance, represented by Doug Brown, Ed Cifune, and Ashley Prester.

Chairman Tom Alder called the Meeting to Order at 6:04 pm

Discussion Items:

- Board of Canvassers Letter**

A letter was submitted from Roger Wordell, Chairman, Little Compton Board of Canvassers, stating that 2012 is a Presidential Election, therefore, primaries in the month of March and September as well as

the November election, would require the use of the school for voting while the proposed construction is taking place. Mr. Wordell asked the Chair to please keep him informed of the project progress.

· Asset Protection Plan – School Committee

The “Asset Protection Plan” (APP) named by RGB and Mt. Vernon groups during their assessment of school deficiencies, was discussed in length by the School Building Committee (SBC). The School Committee (SC) will be discussing the asset plan as an upcoming agenda action item. Tom Arkins expressed his opinion that the assessment plan should be generated from the SBC with a recommendation to the SC for approval, and does not understand why the SBC is not taking the action. Tom expressed his frustration with feeling slighted and distrustful of the SCB’s approach to circumvent around this action. Tom’s understanding was that his affirmative vote to support going forward with an incomplete Stage II Application included the SBC going forward with flushing out the data that supported the APP, and evaluate whether this plan continues to fit into the EdSpec as well as the updated health and safety deficiencies. Ben Gauthier stated that the cover letter submitted with the Stage II Application explained that the SBC will continue to assess ways to construct a more efficient building within the scope of work, and that the SBC is required to submit a complete design. Although Ben agrees that the APP needs to be addressed, he does not agree that it is the responsibility of the SBC. There was confusion from some members of the SBC that Tom Arkins was

asking for a new plan. Tom explained that he is not asking for a new plan, but he is asking, once again, for the SBC to develop a bare-bones option, an option that he feels is owed to the public and the themselves. Tom also disputed the rumors that he has an ulterior motive for his request, and he was upset to find out from a newspaper reporter that RIDE has stated that the “SBC should take the time to get the project right”. Tom feels that the SBC has been made to feel like there is a huge rush to get the project plan finalized. Tom also feels that there are always options and that originally, the Committee was given a project that would cost \$28 million, with alternative ideas, was reduced to \$21.3 million and that with further ideas, additional reductions may be realized or at least justified as to why no additional reductions can be realized. Lynn Brousseau-Lebreux stated that the School Committee gave the charge to the SBC to develop a plan, and after looking at many plans the SBC did just what was requested. Tom Arkins feels that the SBC has looked at probably 10 versions of the same plan, but has not looked at any different plans. Ed Cifune stated that within the Stage I process, the SBC did address many plans, and that the RGB APP was developed for a long range laundry list and was not intended as a building plan. Ed also suggested that perhaps the SBC should think of an asset protection plan as a Plan B, an alternative plan if the building project fails to be approved by the voters. Ed also stated that one option will be before the voters, but that the architects and the SBC looked at probably 25 options over the past 4 years, and that the committee approved and sent Stage I to the State, with proof that

the building is insufficient, and within the planning for Stage II, justification for educational and health and safety insufficiencies were realized. Mark Rapp stated that the SBC, in Stage I, had addressed all code and building violations, voted unanimously to move forward with a plan, and the proposed plan was not an issue until the estimated cost was received. Mark said that the architects did a great job in redesigning to reduce the cost from \$28 to \$21 million, and that the SBC should commit and move forward. Tom Alder does not agree that the SBC should move to look at alternative plans, that this should be the decision of the SC, as they are the ones that have to commit the funds necessary to pay for this option. Tom Arkins stated that discussions of alternative options were on the agenda for four meetings in a row, and that the Chair always had an excuse for not taking a vote. Tom Alder, in defending his position, read a section of minutes from a meeting last year with Jo DaSilva. Dave MacGregor agreed that the SC would need to pay for the cost of alternative plans, and that all members made compromises to agree on one plan, adjustments to the site could realize some additional cost savings, but he would not be interested in changing the building plan. Dave stated that the SBC voted for a plan that should move forward and if the town votes it down, than an APP could be implemented. Tom Arkins expressed his frustration with the SBC again, and asked what the committee is afraid of in moving forward with alternative plans, that the more information the town voters have, the better off everyone will be with making a decision. Ben Gauthier stated that all members of the SBC want the same result, but

are just going about it differently, that the RGB APP should be flushed out as a project benchmark, and that the outcome will become abundantly clear as to the best interest and cost to the town.

A Motion was made by Mike Steers, seconded by Micah Shapiro, to change from an agenda item discussion on the Asset Protection Plan, to an action item for a committee vote. Motion carried unanimously.

A Motion was made by Ben Gauthier, seconded by Tom Arkins, that the School Building Committee recommend to the School Committee a request for an RFP to price the Mt Vernon group Asset Protection Plan as an executable project. Motion carried, with Tom Alder, Jacob Talbot, Ben Gauthier, Mike Steers, John Osbourne, Bob Mushen, Beryl Borden, BG Shanklin, Tom Arkins, Micah Shapiro and Lynn Brousseau-Lebreux in favor, Dave MacGregor, Jim Gibney and Mark Rapp opposed.

Discussion continued, Doug Brown stating that establishing a scope for an additional plan would be necessary, implementing fully with a phasing plan, the necessity of using temporary trailers for classrooms, etc. with resulting plan not meeting the committee objectives and the reimbursement cost still in question. Ed Cifune stated that he feels that justification has already been explored, that an additional alternative would not release the School Committee from liability, only from some deficiencies, and how can the committee present two different plans to the voters. Ben Gauthier stated that whatever happens, the comparisons have to be an “apples

to apples approach”, and that may prove to be difficult.

Micah Shapiro stated that the alternative plan should be called a “failure plan”, and not a Plan B or asset plan. Ben Gauthier explained that RGB used “Asset Protection Plan” language, and the State uses this term as well. Lynn Brousseau-Lebreux said to send the recommendation to the SC for a decision, Tom Arkins stated that the School Committee is not knowledgeable enough, and the recommended decisions should come from the SBC. Jim Gibney stated that he has attended over 30 SCB meetings, and he is questioning what his role has been over the course of these 30 meetings if the committee votes to revisit the RGB and Mt. Vernon plans as part of the completion of the Stage II Application process. Jim said that in his vote to move forward with an incomplete Stage II, he was voting to explore some minor adjustments to the plan only. Tom Arkins stated that additional exploration should only bolster what has been submitted, and that Joe DaSilva wanted to see justification for the plan. Tom also stated that the committee does not have a defensible cost estimate at this time for an APP. Tom Alder stated that the SBC meetings should go on regularly, as this exercise would be for justification, not to change the proposed submitted plan or re-tool that plan.

Joe Quinn, School Committee member asked to comment, Tom Alder stated that he cannot take public comment at this time. Joe disagreed with Tom’s assessment of the meeting rules, and Tom agreed to let Joe speak. Joe stated that the motion on the floor is too

restrictive, that the architects will not be able to compare apples to apples, and that the SBC will not get out of the motion what they want, and that the motion should be described as an executable rehabilitation of the building, as it restricts any other options. Tom Alder stated that the plan is a rehab, as 90% of the building would be preserved. Audience member John Lint stated that these issues should have been resolved prior to submitting the Stage II Application, that the same old issues are discussed over and over again but never resolved and that it is the responsibility of the SC to deal with the possible voters failure of the project. Dave MacGregor stated that the SBC did their job, and that the SC needs to make the decision to continue with an additional plan. Micah Shapiro stated that the SC would need to address the APP regardless of the cost to implement that plan.

Reports:

- **Design Review Subcommittee Report & Recommendations (to include discussions on DB Report)**

BG Shanklin reported on the Design Review Subcommittee (DRS) meeting that took place earlier in the day. The DRS) voted on recommendations for the architects to review, but did not vote on a particular design. BG read the motion for the record, as there was a motion voted on for clarification from the December 6, 2010 motion. The December 6, 2010 DRS motion read as follows:

“Ben Gauthier moved to include the business of the design

subcommittee, providing a reduced scale parking and parent drop-off on the West side of the school as the only change to the Phase II submission. The baseball field shall be moved no further than required to accommodate the necessary access path, dugouts and grading as appropriated. The reduction on available parking shall be accommodated in the present location of the maintenance garage if operations of the school and/or improved use of the town common call for it as some further point in time. Seconded by BG Shanklin, approved unanimously, with Don Gomez having departed by this point”.

The December 13, 2010 Design Review Subcommittee motion, made by BG Shanklin, seconded by Don Gomez, the motion carried unanimously. The clarification is in italics:

“The changes to the Phase II Submission are as follows: The Parent/child drop off is to remain as it is currently, to the South of the building, with any site design improvements necessary to improve the safety and security of children, and that we provide available space on the West side of the proposed design school design, with limited parking, for accessible parking spaces, fire apparatus and goods delivery access. The baseball field shall be moved no further than required to accommodate the necessary access path, dugouts and grading as appropriated. The reduction on available parking shall be accommodated in the present location of the maintenance garage if operations of the school and/or improved use of the town common call for it as some further point in time. The motion carried unanimously 4-0”.

BG stated that DRS discussions continued on the role of the DRS, with a motion made by BG Shanklin, seconded by Don Gomez and unanimously approved 4-0, “to recommend that the Design Review Subcommittee be retained as a standing committee at the direction of the Building Committee”. Mike Steers went on to explain the DRS discussions on recommended changes. Ed Cifune stated that the difference in scope is significant from the submitted proposal, and the architects would need to send the cost estimate out again. Jim Gibney had concerns for the parent drop off changing from the approved design, as this is a huge issue that has been discussed in length. Micah Shapiro had concerns for a design plan that is so dependent on obtaining the maintenance shed area for parking, and suggested that this would be a good time to ask the Town Council (TC) about their intentions for this building. Bob Mushen stated that the relocation of the maintenance shed to the Transfer Station area has been discussed by the TC, and they have received an estimate of \$45,000 to construct a metal building to house maintenance. Bob did not know what the implications of tearing down the shed would be, but he believes that there is TC support for relocating maintenance to the Transfer Station, and he certainly sees the need to free this area up for school parking. Ben Gauthier does not want the school project to be held hostage by the maintenance shed decision. Beryl Borden wanted to note that this proposed change in parking would not include circling around the Grange Hall. Discussions continued on the newly proposed parent drop off area. Tom Alder stated that

although the proposed plan is not ideal for parent drop off and reduced parking for now, it does reduce expansion to the West and a compromise seems to be the best option and may be more appealing to the voters. Bob Mushen stated that he does not like what the new proposal does to the corner, but he does not have a better option. Jim Gibney stated that although the staff has always found a way to meet contractual obligations regarding chaperoning the pick up and drop off area, the safety of the children crossing near cars and buses has been a huge concern for both staff and parents and the area continues to be chaotic, especially in the afternoon. Dave MacGregor, who used to work at the school, and has first hand knowledge of this issue, stated any plan should have drop off stay off the street, with minimal affect on the fields. BG Shanklin continued the reiteration of the Design Subcommittee's discussion, and stated that he is very concerned with the concentration of traffic coming out of the corner as he counted 200-215 cars coming and going between 8-9 AM and 2-3:30 PM on 3 days of observation.

A motion was made by Tom Alder, seconded by Micah Shapiro to move up the agenda action item vote to "Accept recommendations of Design Review Subcommittee". Motion carried unanimously.

Action Items:

- **Vote to accept recommendations of Design Review Subcommittee**

A motion was made by Tom Alder, seconded by Dave MacGregor to accept the Design Review Subcommittee's recommendation, from the

December 13, 2010 Minutes 5.a as stated: The changes to the Phase II Submission are as follows: The Parent/child drop off is to remain as it is currently, to the South of the building, with any site design improvements necessary to improve the safety and security of children, and that we provide available space on the West side of the proposed design school design, with limited parking, for accessible parking spaces, fire apparatus and goods delivery access. The baseball field shall be moved no further than required to accommodate the necessary access path, dugouts and grading as appropriated. The reduction on available parking shall be accommodated in the present location of the maintenance garage if operations of the school and/or improved use of the town common call for it as some further point in time. Motion was rejected 5-7 to accept the Design Subcommittee's recommendations, with Tom Alder, John Osbourne, Mark Rapp, Jim Gibney, Micah Shapiro, Lynn Brousseau-Lebreux and Dave MacGregor against the motion, and Bob Mushen, Mike Steers, BG Shanklin, Jake Talbot, and Beryl Borden in favor of the motion. Tom Arkins and Ben Gauthier had left the meeting prior to the vote.

John Osbourne was disappointed that the vote would reduce parking spaces. Jake Talbot would have preferred to see the detailed revised plan drawn out prior to voting.

A motion by Tom Alder, seconded by Jim Gibney, to instruct Durkee Brown Architects to develop a site schematic, revising the site plan to

eliminate the parking on the West side of the building and replace with a smaller access drive, turnaround and handicapped parking and provide an integrated playground to the North of the new drive, meet with Little Compton and RIDE to review changes, and submit to RIDE as site plan revision to Stage II Application. Motion carried 9-3, with Tom Alder, Jacob Talbot, John Osbourne, BG Shanklin, Mark Rapp, Jim Gibney, Dave MacGregor, Micah Shapiro and Lynn Brousseau-Lebreux in favor, and Bob Mushen, Mike Steers and Beryl Borden opposed.

A motion was made by Jim Gibney, seconded by Micah Shapiro, to keep the Design Review Subcommittee in standing. Motion carried unanimously.

• Vote to submit approved changes, with proposal, to School Committee for approval of funding authorization.

A motion was made by Tom Alder, seconded by Micah Shapiro, to submit approved changes, with proposal, to the School Committee for approval and funding authorization. Motion approved 10-2 with Tom Alder, Jacob Talbot, John Osbourne, BG Shanklin, Mark Rapp, Jim Gibney, Micah Shapiro, Lynn Brousseau-Lebreux and Dave MacGregor, Beryl Borden in favor, and Mike Steers and Bob Mushen opposed.

Public Input:

No additional public input.

- Architects Report (to include timeline and implications of delaying a proposed March 2012 start date).**

Ed Cifune reviewed the timeline of the required steps for Stage II with the SBC. Stage II needs to be complete for a Board of Regents Review by mid February. Ed suggested that someone get on board with speaking to local legislators regarding the submission of the plan to get the proposal on the State Assembly docket. A complete bid package would need to go out by January 2012 to begin construction by March 2012. Ashley Prester suggested that getting the bid package out by November 2011 would give a bit more cushion for a construction start date in March. Ashley also recommended that due to the late hour of the meeting (8:45 PM), the Architects Report could be delayed until the next scheduled meeting.

Next SBC Meeting - The Chair will try to schedule a meeting before the end of the year pending the ability for the School Committee to schedule a meeting next week to discuss the latest actions of the Building Committee.

Motion to adjourn at 8:48 PM by Dave MacGregor, seconded by Micah Shapiro. Motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Laura Rom, Clerk

LCSBC

(Minutes approved, with revisions, January 24, 2011)